



Washington State Department of Health  
Public Health Laboratory  
Risk and Safety Assessment

Project Stakeholder Group  
Groundrules  
July 11, 2008

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Washington State's Public Health Laboratory has operated in the City of Shoreline since 1985 and has maintained a stellar safety record during that time. In an effort to further strengthen relationships with the community, however, staff at the Public Health Laboratory are embarking on a Risk and Safety Assessment. This assessment will be conducted by an independent firm with specialized expertise in performing this type of an evaluation.

Although the Laboratory is inspected and certified every year by a number of local and federal agencies and organizations, this assessment provides a unique opportunity for the greater Shoreline community to learn more about the Laboratory and its operations. Laboratory staff have committed to conducting this assessment with complete transparency, actively engaging the Shoreline community throughout the process. Laboratory staff want to identify and assess any potential risk to the surrounding community and identify any safety practices that will minimize this risk.

Components of the Risk and Safety Assessment will include:

1. An analysis of the materials used and the types of tests performed at the Laboratory and a look at the physical features of the building as they pertain to community risk and safety.
2. An evaluation and series of recommendations related to the day-to-day operations of the Laboratory, including procedures and safety protocols adhered to by Laboratory professionals as they pertain to risk and safety of the surrounding community.
3. An evaluation and series of recommendations related to emergency procedures in place at the Laboratory. This will include an evaluation of the types of procedures that would be used internally at the Laboratory during an emergency, as well as an evaluation of those procedures that would be used in the case of a wider emergency affecting the surrounding area.

The Risk and Safety Assessment will begin in August, and is anticipated to be complete by December 2008.

## COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

The Department of Health has formed a Community Stakeholder Group to participate in the Risk and Safety Assessment process. The group will meet approximately seven times between May and December 2008, and will be guided by a neutral facilitator. The Stakeholder Group is made up of representatives from various neighborhood associations, Fircrest School, the Shoreline School District, the Shoreline Emergency Management Council, and the City's Fire and Police Departments. A roster of the Stakeholder Group is attached to this document.

The Stakeholder Group is critical to the project's success. Although the Public Health Laboratory has operated safely and successfully since 1985, the Risk and Safety Assessment is an important component in providing reassurance to the greater Shoreline community about the Laboratory and its operations. The Stakeholder Group will serve as important "eyes and ears", ensuring that the assessment is being conducted as professionally and as transparently as possible. In addition, the Group will provide recommendations to the Laboratory on the best way to ensure successful communication, over the long-term, with the Shoreline community.

The groups most keenly interested in, or affected by Laboratory operations, are represented on the Stakeholder Group. Without the ongoing participation of these interests, the Risk and Safety assessment cannot be deemed a success. The ultimate goal of the Stakeholder Group process is to ensure that those representative interests remain engaged and informed at every phase of the assessment, so that the assessment is fully transparent, and so that it fully incorporates the needs, interests, opinions and perspectives of the greater Shoreline community.

Working over seven meetings, the Group is charged with the task of reviewing and providing input at every phase of the consultant team's work. Specifically, the Stakeholder Group will:

1. Review and comment on the consultant scope of work for the Risk and Safety Assessment.
2. Identify a smaller subset of the Group to participate in the interviews used to select the consultant team.
3. Meet with the consultant team at key milestones of the Risk and Safety Assessment, in order to understand and review the work completed to date, ask questions of the team, clarify explanations of the results, and offer their opinions regarding the assessment process.
4. Advise the Department of Health on the best way to inform the greater community about the risk assessment process, as well as the best way to engage and inform the community over the long-term about the work of the Laboratory.
5. Meet with the Shoreline City Council to share their perspectives and recommendations.

## Operating Guidelines and Groundrules

It is very much the intention of the Department of Health to work in a fully collaborative and interactive way with the Stakeholder Group. The intent is to work iteratively through every phase of both the consultant selection process and the Risk and Safety Assessment.

The Stakeholder Group will work in a relatively informal fashion. The goal of each meeting will be to engage in a comprehensive discussion of the issues at hand. Full consensus of the Group on every issue will not be sought, rather, opinions will be shared and noted. Where consensus seems to emerge around a particular issue or recommendation, it will also be noted. In order to be deemed a “successful process” at the end of the Risk and Safety Assessment, Stakeholder Group members must feel that they have both contributed to and actively influenced:

- The consultant team selection process
- The process and reported results of the Risk and Safety Assessment
- The ways in which the Department of Health has listened and responded to community concerns throughout the Assessment process, the communication strategy used to share the results of the Assessment with the greater Shoreline community, and the long-term communication program established between the Public Health Laboratory and the Shoreline community

In order to conduct their work as successfully as possible, Stakeholder Group members are asked to abide by the following groundrules:

- Focus on broad interests, not individual positions
- Use the group’s time well
- Engage constructively – vigorous, respectful exchange that encourages all points of view, open communication and good solutions
- Watch your air time – make sure everyone has the chance to participate
- Focus on preferred end states, options for mutual gain, and fair measures of evaluation
- Represent well the people who sent you here
- Strive for consensus – to seek out what you and the group can and cannot agree with, live with, or modify to achieve agreement – while recognizing that majority and minority opinions may be the best result on some topics
- Strive, at every meeting, to conduct your business in a way that will improve your ability to work together in the future
- Cell phone ringers and laptop computers are turned off during our meeting time together

## ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

Margaret Norton-Arnold will serve as the group's facilitator. It Is Margaret's responsibility to ensure that the Group process is as successful as possible. To that end, here is Margaret's pledge to the Group:

- I will begin and end every meeting on time.
- I will ensure that you have meeting materials well in advance in order to allow ample time for your review.
- I will make certain that everyone has the chance to participate, and that no single interest dominates the discussion.
- I will be focused on the goals for each meeting, and will strive to help you achieve them in a relatively friendly but ultimately highly driven way.
- I will keep the discussion as simple as possible, striving hard to not let us get bogged down.
- I will do everything I can to help you succeed as a group – including individual conversations in between meetings if we need them.
- I am responsible for the process of our discussion and neutral in terms of its content.